

Business MATCHMAKING

U.S. Small Business Administration



A Cooperative Agreement between SBA and HP Small Business Foundation.

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SBA and the HP Small Business Foundation Kickoff 2005 Business Matchmaking Season

*More than \$26 million in contracts awarded
to small businesses in program's first three years*

NASHVILLE, TN – The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the HP Small Business Foundation, a non-profit subsidiary of HP, today officially announced the Business Matchmaking schedule of both one-on-one and online matchmaking events for 2005. Tennessee Governor Phil Bredesen joined SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto and Michael Pinckert, General Manager, Small and Medium Business for HP, in the announcement.

Business Matchmaking is a public-private sector contracting initiative made possible through a cooperative agreement between the SBA and the HP Small Business Foundation. The program works by matching small companies with government agencies and private sector corporations including Fortune 500 companies. The small business and the buyer then have a chance to meet one-on-one or via phone and negotiate a business deal for potential contracts.

“Small businesses make up 99 percent of all U.S. businesses, employ nearly 56 million people and account for more than two-thirds of all new jobs,” said SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto. “The SBA and the HP Small Business Foundation are committed to supporting the success of these companies by enabling them to meet and negotiate contracts with government agencies and corporations. Business Matchmaking gives small business owners opportunities they may not otherwise have.”

“Helping small businesses thrive is vital to jumpstarting the economy, and until now, entrepreneurs in pursuit of government and large-company contracts have often had to learn by trial and error, sometimes at great expense, and for mixed results at best,” said Robyn West, vice president, Small and Medium Business, HP.

West continued, “Business Matchmaking streamlines this process, helping them find the right buyer at the right time. To date, the program has created nearly 23,000 appointments for small business owners throughout the U.S. to meet with buyers from government agencies as well as the country's largest corporations – resulting in more than \$26 million in new business for small businesses.”

(more)

The 2005 Business Matchmaking one-on-one schedule includes events on the following dates in these cities:

March 23, 24— Nashville
April 26— Washington, D.C.
June 7, 8— Los Angeles
Sept. 14— Milwaukee

Online Business Matchmaking, a new and innovative expansion announced earlier this year promises to greatly extend the reach of the current matchmaking program by enabling small business owners to participate in a virtual matchmaking process without having to travel to one of the above events. Online Business Matchmaking is scheduled start in 2005, initially as a pilot phase, on the following dates in these cities:

March 14— Phoenix
March 28— Albuquerque
April 4— Kansas City
April 11— Tampa
April 18— Denver

In September 2005, Online Business Matchmaking is slated to be rolled out nationwide to tens of thousands of small businesses that have not previously had access to similar procurement opportunities. Small Business owners interested in learning more about Business Matchmaking or participating in the upcoming events are encouraged to visit the Business Matchmaking Web site at www.businessmatchmaking.com.

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